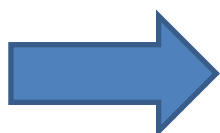


## **Interested in the Business Enterprise Program?**

The Randolph-Sheppard Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides entrepreneurial opportunities for legally blind clients of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS). Blind entrepreneurs manage a wide variety of food-service operations, including cafeterias, coffee shops, vending machine locations and highway area vending sites. Through this program, blind individuals receive training and opportunities to become independent business owners.

The following information is to be used as a helpful tool to determine if you are an ideal candidate for the BEP. This guide does not guarantee referral into the program, and referral does not guarantee admittance into the training class. Please speak with your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to review your independent employment goal.



### **Step 1: Ensure you meet the federal minimum qualifications**

In order to be accepted for training in the BEP, an applicant must:

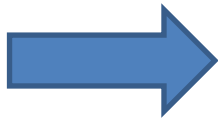
- be legally blind\*;
- at least eighteen (18) years of age;
- a United States citizen; and
- hold a high school diploma or equivalent.

Candidates must also have:

- adequate orientation and mobility skills to travel independently;
- skills sufficient to communicate with the public in a courteous manner; and
- the ability to develop and maintain working relationships with others;
- be able to maintain required records and reports;
- mathematical skills sufficient to operate a small business; and
- independent daily living skills sufficient to allow the applicant to meet personal care and facility maintenance needs.

Successful entrepreneurs are leaders, customer service oriented, ethical, mature, organized, motivated, are ready to work, and are able to relocate to accept an opportunity.

\*Legal blindness is defined by the Social Security Administration as best corrected visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye; or a visual field limitation such that the widest diameter of the visual field, in the better eye, subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees.



## **Step 2: Research the Randolph Sheppard Act and the Indiana Business Enterprise Program**

### **Indiana Business Enterprise Program**

- [FAQ for Interested Candidates](#)

### **National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision**

- [About the Business Enterprise Program from a National perspective](#)
- [BEP Brochure \(Word and PDF\)](#)
- [BEP Introductory Video](#)

### **National Association of Blind Merchants partnership with National Federation for the Blind**

- [Introductory BEP Video](#)

### **Review Employment and Entrepreneurship Webinars**

- [Customer Service Basics](#)
- [Do you have the right personality to be an entrepreneur?](#)

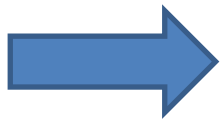


## **Step 3: Work at your own pace on basic business and computer skill courses.**

[‘Business Basics’](#) is a 5 part free class option offered through Hadley School for the Blind that includes; Business Writing, Using Excel, Internet: Beyond the Basics, Business Communications, and Business Fundamentals.

[Forsythe Center for Employment and Entrepreneurship](#) also provides free classes to Hadley students on a variety of different skills

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#### **Step 4: Talk with your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor**

Think you're an ideal candidate and ready to start the process? It's time to call your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and discuss this goal. When you meet with your VR counselor try to come prepared with some of the following documentation that verifies your eligibility and readiness for this training opportunity. Documentation that is useful can include:

- High school and/or higher education transcripts (if applicable)
- A resume outlining any prior work or volunteer experience
- Copies of Certificates of Training or Certificates of Completion

Your Vocational Rehabilitation counselor will also need to compile information prior to referral that may include:

- Medical proof of 20/200 vision or a 20% field of vision
- A psychological evaluation
- Criminal background check